**Generation of Hydro-Electric Power**

1664. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(A) whether hydro power is the cheaper and pollution free energy source; and

(b) if so, the action proposed to produce more hydro generated power to light up every household at the earliest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA):(a) Yes Sir. Hydro power is a renewable, economic, non-polluting and environmentally benign source of energy. Hydro Power Stations have the inherent ability for instantaneous starting, stopping, load variations etc. and help in improving the reliability of the power system.

(b) The benefits of hydro power as a clean, environment friendly and economically attractive source of energy have been sufficiently recognized. The need for is accelerated development also comes from its capability of enhanced system reliability and economics of utilization of resources.

The Government of India is according a high priority to exploit the untapped hydro electric potential in the country to promote clean energy and correct the hydrothermal imbalance, and has initiated concrete measures to increase the hydro installed capacity in the country. A hydro policy was announced in August, 1998 for the development of hydro power incorporating several enabling steps and measures. The Hydro Policy among other things lays emphasis on basin wise development, evolving consensus on inter-State issues, mitigation of geological risks, simplified procedure for transfer of clearances, promoting joint venture arrangements etc.

In order to accelerate the process of survey and investigation of the new hydroelectric sites and to create a shelf of feasible projects which could be taken up for execution, the Central Electricity Authority has carried out a preliminary ranking study of the balance hydro sides to enable potential hydro developers to take up detailed survey and investigation, cost estimates and tentative tariff for the most attractive and viable schemes in each basin in a phased manner.

Through a process of countrywide consultation, 162 hydro-electric schemes, with an estimated capacity of 50,560 MW, have been indentified for preparation of feasibility studies. This initiative for tapping 50,000 MW of hydro power was launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister on May 24,2003 and will pave the way for the creation of a shelf of project which will be implemented in the next two Five Year Plans. This exercise is being undertaken by various organizations under the overall coordination of CEA.

The Pre-Feasibility Report (PFRs) will provide useful information to prospective developers for taking up detailed Survey and Investigation and DPR formulation and facilitate the accelerated development of balance Hydro Electric Potential in the country. This is considered essential to generate a shelf of project which could be taken up for execution during Eleventh and Twelfth Plan and beyond.

The Govt. has also approved a three stage clearance procedure for al hydel projects to be executed by the Central Public Sector Undertakings in consultation with the Ministries of Finance and Environment and Forests. This procedure will help in avoiding time and cost over-run of projects.

**Exemption to Mega Power Projects**

1665. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in 1999, Government had announced Mega Power Project Policy according to which the Thermal Power projects having a capacity of 1000 MW or more and selling power to more than one State are exempted from all customs and other duties levied by Government:

(b) if so, the details of unis which have come up under this policy and the exemption that the Government has given to such units since 1999, year-wise and unit-wise; and

(c) the details of projects notified by Government under "Mega Power Project Policy"?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) The revised Mega Power Policy of